

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Barbara Bowles

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Bowles, Barbara, 1947-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Barbara Bowles,
Dates:	July 16, 2002
Bulk Dates:	2002
Physical Description:	3 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:27:33).
Abstract:	Investment manager Barbara Bowles (1947 -) became the first African American female equity manager in Chicago when she established the Kenwood Group in 1989. In 1996, Bowles became the first African American woman to launch a mutual fund with the debut of the Kenwood Growth and Income Fund. Bowles was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on July 16, 2002, in Chicago, Illinois. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2002_098
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Financier Barbara Bowles was born in Nashville, Tennessee, on September 17, 1947. Growing up in racially segregated Nashville, Bowles was an excellent student. She received her B.A. in mathematics with honors from Fisk University in 1968 and then accepted an offer from First National Bank of Chicago to fund her M.B.A. in finance, which she earned in 1971 from the University of Chicago, while working as a management trainee. She was the first African American in the program. Bowles spent over a decade in the investment management area of First National Bank (now Bank One) after she graduated, becoming the first African American woman there promoted to vice president. Bowles moved on to head the investor relations departments at Beatrice Companies, Inc. from 1981 to 1984 and Kraft, Inc. from 1984 to 1989.

In 1989, Bowles became the first African American female equity manager in Chicago when she established the Kenwood Group, Inc. It took six months to win her firm's first client, Quaker Oats. Since then, the Kenwood Group has attracted many other high profile clients, including: Abbott Laboratories, the Field Museum and the Chicago Transit Authority. Bowles' firm manages pension, endowment and public funds, is 100 percent minority-owned and manages assets of nearly \$500 million. In 1996, Bowles became the first African American woman to launch a mutual fund with the debut of the Kenwood Growth and Income Fund. Her company has been featured in *Crain's Chicago Business*, *Black Enterprise* and various other media.

Bowles serves on the board of directors at Black & Decker Corporation; Georgia-Pacific Corporation; Wisconsin Energy Corporation; Hyde Park Bank and Trust Company of Chicago; the Chicago Urban League; Children's Memorial Hospital and Fisk University.

She is married to Earl Bowles and has one son.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Barbara Bowles was conducted by Larry Crowe on July 16, 2002, in Chicago, Illinois, and was recorded on 3 Betacame SP videocassettes. Investment manager Barbara Bowles (1947 -) became the first African American female equity manager in Chicago when she established the Kenwood Group in 1989. In 1996, Bowles became the first African American woman to launch a mutual fund with the debut of the Kenwood Growth and Income Fund.

Restrictions

Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

Restrictions on Use

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

Related Material

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Persons:

Bowles, Barbara, 1947-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Bowles, Barbara, 1947---Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Investment Manager

HistoryMakers® Category:

BusinessMakers

Administrative Information

Custodial History

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

Preferred Citation

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Barbara Bowles, July 16, 2002. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Barbara Bowles, Section A2002_098_001_001, TRT: 0:30:27 ?
Entrepreneur and equity manager Barbara Bowles offers rich details of life in segregated Nashville, Tennessee. Having lost her father when she was just 3 years old, Bowles recounts her mother's efforts to raise three small children. Bowles also describes the pervasive and systematic racism of Nashville and some of the great figures to rise out of the city such as John Lewis. She discusses her academic successes at Fisk University and landing a position as the

first black executive trainee at the First National Bank of Chicago.

Video Oral History Interview with Barbara Bowles, Section A2002_098_001_002, TRT: 0:29:18 ?

Equity fund manager and financial advisor Barbara Bowles discusses her tenure at First National Bank of Chicago. She recalls both the subtle and overt racism she faced as she rose to vice president, which eventually caused her to leave the bank for positions at Kraft Foods and Beatrice Foods. Bowles explains why she branched out to form her own equity management firm, citing a lack of opportunity for advancement. Bowles recalls the difficulties in starting her own business and being a black woman in a white male-dominated industry.

Video Oral History Interview with Barbara Bowles, Section A2002_098_001_003, TRT: 0:27:48 ?

Equity funds manager and entrepreneur Barbara Bowles offers insight into the world of equity management, detailing life on the trading floor and the inner workings of her firm, The Kenwood Group. Bowles offers financial advice for African Americans and for youth interested in an investment banking career. She also reflects on her career and shares what she thinks the legacy of the Kenwood Group will be.